

VIRGINIA FOXX

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
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COMMITTEE ON  
GOVERNMENT REFORM

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-3305**

November 13, 2006

Regulations and Rulings Division, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau  
Attn: Director Frank Foote  
Notice No. 63  
P.O. Box 14412  
Washington, DC 20044-4412

Dear Director Foote,

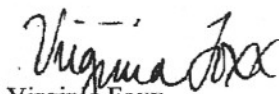
This letter is in response to a public comment period recently announced regarding the proposal to establish the 96,000 acre Swan Creek area (in Wilkes, Yadkin, and Iredell Counties in North Carolina), as an American Viticultural Area (AVA). I support the proposed Swan Creek viticultural area and believe this designation will recognize North Carolina's burgeoning wine making industry and this unique geographic area.

The designation would give a much needed financial boost to the towns and communities both within the borders of the AVA and also the surrounding areas by attracting national attention and tourism. Much of the proposed Swan Creek AVA lies within the Yadkin Valley AVA, which won approval three years ago as the state's first designated wine-producing region. The Yadkin Valley AVA is just over 1,900 square miles and includes all of Yadkin and Wilkes counties, most of Surry and parts of Stokes, Forsyth and Davie Counties.

The Swan Creek area is comprised of unique geological and climatological conditions. In the application for this designation, those representing Swan Creek indicate that the area, in proximity to the 1.8 billion-year-old Brushy Mountains, has a soil composition quite different from the rest of the Yadkin Valley AVA. The presence of the Brushy Mountains results in the region receiving less rainfall than the rest of the Yadkin Valley AVA. Two years ago, when torrential rains made for a poor harvest at many vineyards, Laurel Gray Vineyard reported 25 fewer inches of rain during the season than at some vineyards in Surry County.

These wines are unique and distinctive and merit their own AVA. Your favorable consideration of this request is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to contact my office.

Sincerely,

  
Virginia Foxx  
Member of Congress